

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, and 4-7, 9-12, and 14 will be pending upon entry of this Amendment E and Response After RCE. Claim 1 has been amended to more particularly claim the invention by requiring at least one of the plurality of portions to include information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of the plurality of portions is removed from the gas-permeable first layer. Support for this amendment can be found in the instant Specification at page 10, lines 10-30. Claims 3, 8, and 13 have been cancelled.

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of all pending claims.

1. Rejection of the Claims 1-2 and 4-7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)¹

Reconsideration is requested of the rejection of claims 1, 2, and 4-7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Zhang, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,658,583) in view of Usui (U.S. Patent No. 5,879,378) and further in view of Ingram (U.S. Patent No. 5,366,491).

Claim 1, as amended herein, is directed to a heat patch comprising an enclosure that includes a gas-permeable first layer and a second layer such that a perimeter of the gas-

¹ Applicants note that in paragraph 2 of the Office Action, the Office has rejected claims 1-2 and 4-7 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Zhang, et al. in view of Usui and Ingram. Applicants respectfully assert that this was a typographical error in that the Office intended to reject claims 1-2 and 4-7 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious in view of the cited references as support by the 103(a) language in paragraph 1 of the Office Action. Applicants request the Office to contact Applicants' representative, Mr. Christopher M. Goff, if this assumption is incorrect.

permeable first layer is bonded to a perimeter of the second layer. The gas-permeable first layer includes an inner surface and an outer surface, wherein said entire first layer is gas-permeable. The heat patch also includes a heating composition inside the enclosure, wherein the heating composition is capable of generating heat when a gas is received through the gas-permeable first layer. In addition, the heat patch includes a gas-impermeable cover that is detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer. The gas-impermeable cover includes a plurality of portions detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer, wherein at least one of said plurality of portions includes information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of said plurality of portions is removed from said gas-permeable first layer.

Zhang, et al. disclose an apparatus, product formulation, and method for improved dermal penetration of pharmaceuticals. The apparatus includes a drug formulation reservoir and a heat-generating chamber separated by a first non-permeable wall. The reservoir and chamber are formed in or supported by a housing which may be formed completely or partially of a thermal insulating material. The heat generating chamber (heating element) includes means for generating controlled heat, and preferably, the heat generating means is a chemical composition made of carbon, iron powder, water, and/or salt which is activated upon contact with air. The heat generation chamber is capped by a structure which has substantially non-air permeable areas such as areas preferably formed with good thermal insulating material, such as closed-cell foam tapes, and

openings or areas comprising material with desired permeability to air. Alternatively, the entire structure may be made of semipermeable membrane with desired air permeability. The entire device is stored in an air-tight packaging, or container, or a removable barrier is employed to cover the semipermeable membrane(s) or openings to prevent premature activation of the heat-generating medium. One means to reduce the air flow rate to the heat-generating medium is to place a few small pieces of tape in a convenient place on the device. The tape can be peeled off and placed on top of the opening(s), the semipermeable membrane area(s) or the semipermeable membrane surface to reduce air flow and thus temperature.

Significantly, as recognized by the Office, Zhang, et al. fail to disclose a heat patch comprising an enclosure that includes a gas-permeable first layer and a second layer such that a perimeter of the gas-permeable first layer is bonded to a perimeter of the second layer as is required in Applicants' claim 1. Further, Zhang, et al. fail to teach or suggest a heat patch including a gas-impermeable cover that is detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer, wherein the gas-impermeable cover **includes a plurality of portions detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer**, and wherein at least one of said **plurality of portions includes information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of said plurality of portions is removed from said gas-permeable first layer**.

The Office asserts at pages 7-8 of the instant office action that "the claim limitation recites a cover that includes

a plurality of portion is broadly interpreted by the examiner, and Zhang et al.'s tape/lid (31) meets the required claim limitation and further, Zhang, et al. teaches that the lid is used to regulate the temperature of apparatus in column 11, lines 7-11." Applicants respectfully disagree and submit that the "cover", or structure (22), in Zhang, et al. does not include a plurality of portions as is recited in Applicants' claim 1. Rather, the cover in Zhang, et al. is a single cover that includes substantially non-air permeable areas (24) and openings or areas (26) with desired permeability to air, neither of which are detachably mounted to the cover, wherein the openings or areas (26) may be covered during use by a piece of tape initially located on a different portion of the patch. The "convenient place" on which the pieces of tape are positioned in Zhang, et al. may be accurately characterized as including a plurality of portions, however as noted above, the "cover" of Zhang, et al. merely has the capability to accept these pieces of tape during use of the patch in order to regulate the temperature of the patch.

Recognizing that Zhang, et al. fail to teach or suggest each and every limitation of Applicants' claim 1, the Office attempts to find each and every element of claim 1 as required by the M.P.E.P. for a determination of *prima facie* obviousness by citing the Usui and Ingram references for combination with Zhang, et al. Specifically, Usui discloses an exothermic device that has an exothermic composition enclosed in a flat pouch formed of a film or sheet. The exothermic composition is formed in two layers including an exothermic reaction layer and a single reaction auxiliary layer. The exothermic reaction layer

includes iron powder and the auxiliary layer includes other ingredients. Specifically, a known exothermic composition may be used, which includes, for example, a metal powder, carbon powder, a metallic chloride, water, a water retainer, an inhibitor, a surface active agent, and an anti-foaming agent. The pouch has at least one surface formed of a gas-permeable flat film or sheet in order to allow the exothermic composition enclosed therein to contact oxygen in the atmosphere. Exemplary materials for use as the gas-permeable flat film or sheet include, for example, polymeric materials such as polyethylene, polypropylene, polyamide, polyester, polyvinyl chloride, polyvinylidene chloride, polyurethane, polystyrene, saponified ethylene-vinyle acetate copolymer and ethylene-vinyle acetate copolymer; paper; clothes; and the like. In one particular embodiment, the pouch is formed by placing a gas-tight backing film over the exothermic composition placed on a single gas-permeable film and heat-sealing the peripheries of the gas-permeable film and the backing film.

Ingram discloses a moist heat pack including a temperature monitoring means attached to the outer surface of the moist heat pack that is specifically calibrated to measure skin surface temperature at the opposite outer skin contacting surface. The moist heat pack includes an envelope wherein the bottom portion is applied to the subject's skin. A heat source is positioned in the inner body portion of the envelope. The heat source can be selected from any of a number of sources including, but not limited to, microwave stimulation of microwave susceptible material, electric current and heating elements, warm/hot water activation, or an exothermic chemical reaction of components of

the heat source. The temperature monitoring means comprises a temperature indicating means calibrated to indicate the actual temperature at the interface of the bottom surface of the envelope and the subject's skin over a predetermined range of temperatures. The temperature monitoring means may be a separate device that may be attached to any therapeutic pack. In a preferred embodiment, the temperature indicating means is a liquid crystal temperature indicating strip. The central zone of the strip denotes skin temperature between 40°C to 45°C. The strip has a subtherapeutic temperature range beginning at temperatures marked below 40°C, which indicates a need to reheat the pack. A third zone indicates temperatures above 45°C to provide a warning to the user to remove the moist heat pack from the skin surface.

Significantly, as with the Zhang reference, nowhere do the Usui and Ingram references teach or suggest a heat patch comprising a gas-impermeable cover that is detachably mounted to the outer surface of a gas-permeable first layer, wherein the gas-impermeable cover includes a plurality of portions detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer, and wherein at least one of the plurality of portions includes information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of the plurality of portions is removed from the gas-permeable first layer.

In order for the Office to show a *prima facie* case of obviousness, M.P.E.P. §2142 requires a clear articulation of the reasons why the claimed invention would have been obvious. Specifically, the Supreme Court in KSR International Co. v.

Teleflex Inc., 550 U.S. ___, ___, 82 USPQ2d 1385, 1396 (2007) noted that the burden lies initially with the Office to provide an explicit analysis supporting a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103. "[R]ejections on obviousness cannot be sustained with mere conclusory statements; instead, there must be some articulated reasoning with some rational underpinning to support the legal conclusion of obviousness."² The Court in KSR International further identified a number of rationales to support a conclusion of obviousness which are consistent with the proper "functional approach" to the determination of obviousness as laid down in *Graham v. John Deere Co.* (383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966)). Specifically, as previously required by the TSM (teaching, suggestion, motivation) approach to obviousness, one exemplary rationale indicated requires some teaching, suggestion, or motivation in the prior art that would have led one of ordinary skill to modify the prior art reference or to combine prior art reference teachings to arrive at the claimed invention. Specifically, to reject a claim based on this rationale, the Office must articulate the following: (1) a finding that there was some teaching, suggestion, or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify the reference or to combine reference teachings to arrive at each and every limitation of the claimed invention; (2) a finding that there was reasonable expectation of success; and (3) whatever additional findings based on the *Graham* factual inquiries may be necessary, in view of the facts of the case under consideration, to explain a conclusion of obviousness.

² *In re Kahn*, 441 F.3d 977, 988, 78 USPQ2d 1329, 1336 (Fed. Cir. 2006).
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The Office has failed to meet its burden under number (1) above, as the cited references fail to show each and every limitation of Applicants' invention and there is no apparent reason for one skilled in the art to modify and/or combine the references to arrive at each and every limitation. It simply would not have been obvious to one skilled in the art to arrive at Applicants' claimed combinations.

Specifically, as noted above, nowhere do the cited references teach or suggest a heat patch comprising a gas-impermeable cover that is detachably mounted to the outer surface of a gas-permeable first layer, wherein the gas-impermeable cover includes a plurality of portions detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer, and wherein at least one of the plurality of portions includes information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of the plurality of portions is removed from the gas-permeable first layer. At best, the Zhang, et al. reference discloses a layer that may be partially covered to reduce air flow to the heat-generating medium, however, as noted above, Zhang, et al. do not disclose a cover **formed** of a plurality of portions detachably mounted to a gas-permeable layer³ to accomplish this result as required in Applicants' amended claim 1. Rather, as noted above, Zhang, et al. disclose pieces of tape placed in a convenient place on the device that are removed and subsequently placed over portions of the cover to reduce air flow through the cover. Furthermore, although Zhang, et al. describe that the device may employ a removable

³ See the instant Specification at page 4, lines 5-6 and lines 21-22.

barrier over the semipermeable membrane(s) or openings to prevent premature activation of the heat-generating medium, Zhang, et al. do not disclose that the pieces of tape used to reduce the air flow are part of the disclosed removable barrier. In contrast to the present invention, where removable portions are included within the cover and are removed to expose a portion of the gas-permeable first layer, the pieces of tape in Zhang, et al. are removed from another portion of the device and placed over the cover such that the exposure of the gas-permeable layer is limited. The Usui and Ingram references fail to overcome this shortcoming as the Usui reference merely teaches an exothermic device that has an exothermic composition enclosed in a flat pouch formed of a film or sheet, and the Ingram reference merely teaches a heat pack that includes a temperature monitoring means that measures skin surface temperature. As such, none of the cited references, alone or in combination, teach or suggest a heat patch comprising a gas-impermeable cover that is detachably mounted to an outer surface of a gas-permeable first layer, wherein the gas-impermeable cover includes a plurality of portions detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer.

Furthermore, no where in any of the cited references is it taught or suggested that at least one of said plurality of portions includes information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of said plurality of portions is removed from said gas-permeable first layer. At best, the Ingram reference discloses a liquid crystal temperature-indicating strip that monitors and displays the temperature of the skin. However, as noted above, Ingram does

not disclose at least one of a plurality of portions that includes information related to heat generated by the heat patch when one or more of the plurality of portions is removed from the gas-permeable first layer. Applicants initially submit that the strip of Ingram is not attached to a gas-permeable first layer. In addition, the strip disclosed in Ingram is not detachably connected to the heat patch. Further, the strip in Ingram does not provide information as to what happens when the strip is removed, and in fact, actually teaches away from the instant invention. Specifically, in contrast to the present invention, the strip in Ingram is not meant to be removed. If a user were to remove the strip disclosed in Ingram, the strip would not be capable of performing its described and intended function because removal of the strip would prohibit the strip from indicating the actual temperature at the interface of the bottom surface of the envelope and the subject's skin. As such, none of the cited references, alone or in combination, teach or suggest a heat patch comprising a gas-impermeable cover that is detachably mounted to an outer surface of a gas-permeable first layer, wherein the gas-impermeable cover includes a plurality of portions detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer, and wherein at least one of said plurality of portions includes information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of said plurality of portions is removed from said gas-permeable first layer as is recited in Applicants' originally filed claim 13, and as is now recited in Applicants' amended claim 1.

The Office asserts on page 4 of the instant office action that "with respect to the limitation of 'and wherein at least

one of plurality of portions includes information related to heat generated by the heat patch when one or more of plurality of portions removed from said gas-permeable first layer' has been treated as an intended use recitation." Applicants respectfully disagree. M.P.E.P. §2114, citing *In re Schreiber*, 128 F.3d 1473, 1477-78, states that while features of an apparatus may be recited either structurally or functionally, claims directed to an apparatus must be distinguished from the prior art in terms of structure rather than function. Further, §2114 states that "[a]pparatus claims cover what a device is, not what a device does." *Hewlett-Packard Co. v. Bausch & Lomb Inc.*, 909 F.2d 1464, 1469. In this case, the recitation "wherein at least one of said plurality of portions includes information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of said plurality of portions is removed from said gas-permeable first layer" is in fact a positively claimed structural limitation and does not merely recite the intended function of the invention. Although information included in certain positions of the portion may not be visible until the time at which the portion is removed, the information is nonetheless present on one or more of the plurality of portions at all times, as it is a structural characteristic of the heat patch. The recitation "related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of said plurality of portions is removed" refers to the type of information that is included on one of the portions. The portion does not need to actually be removed for the portion to structurally include the information. Accordingly, Applicants submit that the above-mentioned limitation is not an intended use limitation, but

rather imparts a structural characteristic to the claimed invention that is not shown in any of the cited references.

As there is no teaching or suggestion in the cited references, alone or in combination, to include a gas-impermeable cover in a heat patch wherein the cover is detachably mounted to the outer surface of a gas-permeable first layer, wherein the cover includes a plurality of portions detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer, and wherein at least one of said plurality of portions includes information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of said plurality of portions is removed from said gas-permeable first layer, there is no teaching or suggestion to provide the necessary reasoning needed by one of ordinary skill in the art to modify the heat patch cover to arrive at the heat patch as required in claim 1. Accordingly, claim 1 is patentable over the cited references.

Claims 2 and 4-7 are dependent upon claim 1 and are patentable for the same reasons as claim 1 set forth above, as well as for the additional elements they require.

2. Rejection of the Claims 9-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Reconsideration is requested of the rejection of claims 9-12 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Zhang, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,658,583), Usui (U.S. Patent No. 5,879,378), and Ingram (U.S. Patent No. 5,366491) in view of Kuratomi, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 4,747,841).

Claim 1, from which claims 9-12 directly or indirectly depend, is discussed above.

The Zhang, et al., Usui, and Ingram references are discussed above. Significantly, as discussed above, the Zhang, et al., Usui, and Ingram references fail to teach or suggest a heat patch comprising a gas-impermeable cover that is detachably mounted to the outer surface of a gas-permeable first layer, wherein the gas-impermeable cover includes a plurality of portions detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer, and wherein at least one of said plurality of portions includes information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of said plurality of portions is removed from said gas-permeable first layer. Furthermore, the above cited references fail to provide a reasoning for modifying and/or combining the references to arrive at each and every limitation of Applicants' claimed combination. Kuratomi, et al. fail to overcome the above shortcomings.

Kuratomi, et al. disclose a method and apparatus for moxibustion comprising feeding air to a heat generating composition in contact with an herb material comprising moxa. The heat generating composition comprises pyrogen and the herb material is located adjacent to a skin surface. The pyrogen used comprises a heat generating composition consisting of iron powder, carbon, cellulose, chloride, and water. The air causes the pyrogen to generate heat by oxidation, whereby the herb material is heated and vaporized and the generated heat and vapor act on the skin, causing moxibustion effect. An oxygen-impermeable package body is used to pack the pyrogen while not

in use, and a gas-permeable internal package is used to house the pyrogen. The internal package may be formed of woven fabric of synthetic resin, cotton, etc. The exterior of the internal package is covered with the external package formed of a non-permeable material such as a synthetic resin film or thin plate, preventing the pyrogen from contacting the air. The pyrogen can be adjusted for the desired heat generation time and temperature by adjusting the composition of the material or the ventilating structure. Temperatures of 65°C are common at the heat generation source while the temperature at the point of contact with human skin is about 40°C to about 45°C.

Significantly, Kuratomi, et al., as with the Zhang, et al., Usui, and Ingram references, fail to teach or suggest a heat patch comprising an enclosure that includes a gas-permeable first layer and a second layer, a heating composition inside the enclosure, and a gas-impermeable cover that is detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer, wherein the gas-impermeable cover includes a plurality of portions detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer, and wherein at least one of said plurality of portions includes information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of said plurality of portions is removed from said gas-permeable first layer.

As the references, alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest all of the elements of amended claim 1 and, further, there is no motivation or apparent reason to modify and/or combine the cited references to arrive at each and every

limitation of Applicants' claim 1, claim 1 is patentable over the cited references.

Claims 9-12 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and are thus patentable for the same reasons as set forth above for claim 1 as well as for the additional elements they require.

3. Rejection of the Claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Reconsideration is requested of the rejection of claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Zhang, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,658,583), Usui (U.S. Patent No. 5,879,378), and Ingram (U.S. Patent No. 5,366,491) further in view of Watson, Jr. (U.S. Patent No. 5,692,238).

Claim 1, from which claim 14 depends, is discussed above.

The Zhang, et al., Usui, and Ingram references are discussed above. Significantly, as discussed above, the Zhang, et al., Usui, and Ingram references fail to teach or suggest a heat patch comprising a gas-impermeable cover that is detachably mounted to the outer surface of a gas-permeable first layer, wherein the gas-impermeable cover includes a plurality of portions detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer, and wherein at least one of said plurality of portions includes information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of said plurality of portions is removed from said gas-permeable first layer. Furthermore, the above cited references fail to provide a reasoning for modifying and/or combining the references to arrive at each and every limitation of Applicants' claimed combination. Watson, Jr. fails to overcome the above shortcomings.

Watson Jr. discloses a garment having pockets or other enclosures that are capable of mounting cooling packs such as gel packs therein. Thermally sensitive indicators, such as sensitive color gauge strips, are used to display the packs' current effective temperatures. For example, a thermal sensitive color gauge strip may be mounted along a headband's inside to display the current gel pack temperature by use of a gauge. This gauge's colored reading advises a user that the packs are either too cold or too warm to be effective. The color gauge strip thermometers fitted with each embodiment allow the optimum use of the invention, as packs that are too cold, which would cause discomfort, and packs that are too warm, which loose their ability to cool effectively. The color changing strips used to indicate temperature are sometimes called "Liquid Crystal" thermometers, and are available off the shelf from a variety of commercial sources. As the temperature increases, the color expands and a gauge reading tells the user of this increase. Conversely, a temperature decrease results in a contraction of the colored gauge to visually show less color and a smaller gauge reading.

Significantly, Watson, Jr., as with the Zhang, et al, Usui, and Ingram references, fails to teach or suggest a heat patch comprising an enclosure that includes a gas-permeable first layer and a second layer, a heating composition inside the enclosure, and a gas-impermeable cover that is detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer, wherein the gas-impermeable cover includes a plurality of portions detachably mounted to the outer surface of the gas-permeable first layer, and wherein at least one of said

plurality of portions includes information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of said plurality of portions is removed from said gas-permeable first layer.

As the references, alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest all of the elements of amended claim 1 and, further, there is no motivation or apparent reason to modify and/or combine the cited references to arrive at each and every limitation of Applicants' claim 1, claim 1 is patentable over the cited references.

Claim 14 depends from claim 1 and is thus patentable for the same reasons as set forth above for claim 1 as well as for the additional elements it requires.

In addition to the recitations in claim 1, claim 14 further requires that at least some of the plurality of portions are different colors, the colors supplying the information related to heat generated by the heat patch when one or more of the plurality of portions is removed from the gas-permeable first layer. Applicants note, as is addressed above, that the thermally sensitive color gauge strip disclosed in Watson, Jr. monitors and displays the temperature of the garment.

Applicants initially submit that the color gauge strip is not attached to a gas-permeable first layer as is recited in Applicants' claims. In addition, the disclosed color gauge strip in Watson, Jr. is not meant to be removed from the garment or cooling pack such that the color gauge strip is not detachably connected to the garment. Further, the color gauge strip would not change colors if it were removed because the color gauge strip would not function properly if it were

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removed. Removing the color gauge strip would actually defeat the purpose of the invention of Watson, Jr. Applicants also submit that the color gauge strip would not provide information as to what happens to the temperature when it is removed from the garment as is recited in Applicants' claims. Accordingly, Watson, Jr. does not describe the limitation "wherein at least one of said plurality of portions includes information related to heat that would be generated by the heat patch when one or more of said plurality of portions is removed from said gas-permeable first layer" as is recited in Applicants' claim 14. As such, claim 14 is patentable over the cited references.

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CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, Applicants request withdrawal of the rejections of claims 1, 2, and 4-7, 9-13, and 14 and allowance of all pending claims. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any government fees which may be required to Deposit Account No. 01-2384.

Respectfully Submitted,

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